

Southwest Resource Advisory Council
MEETING MINUTES
Friday, August 13, 2010
Holiday Inn Express
Gunnison, Colorado

ATTENDEES

Southwest Resource Advisory Council Members

Jevin Croteau, Category 1	Andrew Gulliford, Category 2	Jim Cochran, Category 3
Ken Emory, Category 1	Peter Mueller, Category 2	William Ela, Category 3
Al Heaton, Category 1	Andrea Robinsong, Category 2	Alan Staehle, Category 3
Kathy Welt, Category 1	Dan Morse, Category 2	Tony Gurzick, Category 3
		Gerald Koppenhafer, Category 3

Not present: Jim Young, Category 1

BLM/FS Staff

Lori Armstrong, BLM, Southwest District	Brian St. George, BLM , Gunnison Field Office
Mark Stiles, USFS, Center Mgr/Forest Supervisor, San Juan Public Lands Center	Dave Kauffman, Associate Field Manager, Uncompahgre Field Office
Jana Moe, BLM, Administrative Assistant	Sally Thode, BLM , Gunnison Field Office

Visitors

Ty Churchwell	Trout Unlimited	Durango
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Chair Kathy Welt called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Agenda/Minutes: There were no corrections or changes to the Agenda for today's meeting or the minutes from the June 4, 2010 meeting. Tony Gurzick made a motion to approve both, Andy Gulliford seconded the motion. The motion was passed by all. There is a quorum.

District Manager Report – Lori Armstrong

- Service plaques were presented to Bill Ela, Jevin Croteau, Jim Young, Andrea Robinsong, and Alan Staehle, whose RAC terms end on of August 20, 2010. We have not yet received notification on the new appointments.
- White-nose syndrome is a fungus which kills cave-hibernating bats that has predominantly occurred in the eastern U. S., but is now making its way west. It was recently found in Oklahoma. There is a possibility that the fungus is passed by cavers, but we don't really know what is causing the spread. (See Handout) The Forest Service has already closed all caves in Colorado to public entry and the BLM hopes to have a plan in place to take whatever action BLM feels is necessary to prevent the spread of white-nose syndrome into Colorado.

- The Four-Corners area artifacts case is still outstanding. A few of the defendants involved have been convicted and sentenced. A recent issue of *High Country News* had misleading information about the case. A correction will be published later.

Geothermal Power Plant Presentation – Brian St. George

BLM staff members and a couple SW RAC members recently took a field trip to the Raft River Geothermal Plant in Burley, Idaho. The SW RAC viewed and discussed the video shot on the field trip:

- The facility has a two- acre footprint, not including the pipelines. The longest pipeline runs about 2 ½ miles from the well to the plant.
- There are six wells located outside the two-acre footprint. Pipes run just above the ground surface from the wells to the plant, with expansion joints to allow pipes to move.
- The pipelines create barriers to some wildlife species because they are too low to crawl under or too high to jump over.
- Pipe insulation will burn, so pipeline corridors are kept free from vegetation.
- Would the Tomichi Dome area be an appropriate area for geothermal production? BLM is presently working on an EA to determine if leasing is appropriate. After the leasing EA, if appropriate to lease, further NEPA would be required for exploration and resource development, which would likely require an EIS.
- Each geothermal site has different geology/mineralogy. Dissolved solids in the hot water are a big issue.
- Outstanding Questions?
 - To lease or not to lease, and if leased, with what stipulations?
 - Would a state water right also be needed?
 - Is there a secondary use for the water.
 - Is a right to the water needed or just a right to the heat?
 - How can both the county and state agencies get more review time?

Special Designation Areas in the SW RAC District

- Gunnison FO - Brian St. George
 - Powderhorn Wilderness Area – Designated 60,000 acres of BLM Wilderness, adjoins FS wilderness
 - American Flats Wilderness Area – small BLM parcel adjoins FS Uncompahgre Wilderness.
 - Alpine Loop Area has two notable Wilderness Study Areas - Handies Peak and Red Cloud. There are five other WSA's of much smaller size and stature. The status is that only Handies Peak and Red Cloud have been recommended by BLM as suitable for wilderness.
 - The DeGette Wilderness bill includes Powderhorn West and a West Elk addition north of Dillon Pinnacles. Congresswoman Degette is making the rounds to BLM offices for discussion on the areas proposed. The maps and discussions don't match what is currently being proposed as the bill is changing. It may be challenging to get to the BLM section of Powderhorn West included as it is close to active forest treatments.
 - Need to review and update the visitation statistics for Alpine Loop and nearby WSA's.

- Uncompahgre FO – Dave Kauffman (See Handout)
- San Juan Public Lands Center – Mark Stiles
 - The 1993 CO Wilderness Act defined “Areas” as potential wilderness where upstream water rights issues could not be resolved.
 - The Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) was established in June 2000. The Management Plan for CANM was completed in July 2010 after all protests were resolved. There were no appeals on the CANM travel management plan. It is estimated that there are 100+ sites per square mile within the monument.
 - WSA’s
 - Dolores County supports the Dolores River Canyon WSA, but Montrose County has not yet committed. Nothing is happening this year due to the activity on the lower Dolores. This is the only WSA in the SJPLC that was recommended by BLM for potential wilderness designation.
 - The McKenna Peak WSA was partially included in the present San Juan Wilderness Bill.
 - Weber Mountain/Menefee Mountain
 - Cross Canyon, Cahone, Squaw/Papose

Discussion:

What does a National Conservation Area (NCA) designation do?

- BLM UFO/GJ received a one-time amount of ~\$100,000 with the creation of Dominguez-Escalante (D-E) NCA and a small increase in overall budget.
- A NCA manager for the D-E NCA will not be considered for hiring until the management plan is complete. Additional funding is being used on the ground.
- The NCA designation came with authorization for funding, but not any appropriations.
- Monies for NCA management can come from existing funding which was already being spent for management on those lands. Additionally funding could be at the expense of other programs, due to no new money.

Dollars spent per acre of management: (per Lori)

- \$1 per acre for BLM
- \$2 per acre for BLM NCA’s
- \$4 per acre for Forest Service lands
- \$9 per acre for National Park Service lands

Alpine Loop Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP)

- The Draft RAMP has been published and the public comment period is closed.
- There is public confusion between the DeGette Wilderness Bill, the Gunnison Travel Management Plan and Trout Unlimited Alpine Loop Campaign.
- The RAMP has not mentioned limiting camping to designated camping areas only.
- There is presently no funding for signage if the RAMP is completed, but BLM may be able to get some state OHV money for this. BLM is presently stockpiling signs from other sources.
- There has been extra law enforcement presence this summer on Alpine Loop. This generated a lot of contacts regarding alcohol and drug use.

- There've been a lot of moose sightings on the Loop this summer.

BREAK FOR LUNCH (Dan Morse will not be returning to the meeting after lunch, but a quorum is still present)

Wildhorse and Burro discussion – (continued from last meeting)

- Dr. Gerald Koppenhafer's letter to the State Director has been forwarded to the BLM Washington Office
- The comment period has been extended for the Wild Horse and Burro Program Strategy Development Document to September 3, 2010.
- Science – use it! There are lots of myths floating around in the Wild Horse and Burro program.
- Mark said that they have tried contraceptives on the Spring Creek herd and are looking at a proposal for another type of contraceptive, which would involve giving a primer dose during a gather, rather than darting boosters after. They have a gather scheduled for September 2011. The BLM funding is tied to the gathering operations, and not necessarily for equine contraceptives. They are hoping to reduce reproduction by half from the existing levels.
 - Gerald said that this would not provide total reproductive control. Darting success can be variable and could cause colts to be born later in the year resulting in less vigor to sustain them through the winter.

Wild Horse and Burro Resolution:

A motion was made by Alan Staehle to amend the existing Wild Horse and Burro Resolution with the following language: "and no science-based and practical options to manage an ecological balance should be eliminated", to the final therefore of the existing resolution. The motion was seconded by Tony Gurzick and passed by the RAC.

Discussion on the Public Perception of the BLM

1) Is BLM getting message out to the public?

- Messages about BLM are not often seen in the best light. There are variances between the different BLM offices in the state.
- BLM is not as identifiable as a federal land management agency as the Forest Service.
- The "alternative" acronym-based names for BLM are not heard of as frequently as in the past, so there appears to be improvement.
- The quality of BLM staff defines the agency.
- Most people, especially from other areas of the U.S., believe that all federal lands are National Parks. They are not aware that BLM or the USFS exist.
- Need to get information about BLM lands and public lands management to the schools to increase awareness that the public lands are actually being managed.
- More information on BLM's management requirements and enforcement is needed.
- Need more people on the ground interacting with the public.
- Uniforms set BLM personnel apart from the general public.
- Need to get information on the good things BLM does out to the people.

- Education about BLM, including that multiple-use remains as an integral part of the mission.
- Multiple-use language disappearing from public lands literature and signage.
- Multiple-uses and values do not mean every use on every area.
- Care and maintenance of facilities promotes a good image.
- Kansas has various signs to promote farms, oil well production, etc., maybe BLM should try something similar.

2) What is the public perception of BLM

- Oil and gas controversy is still resonating within the public.
- BLM image on handling oil & gas is improving
- What is the purpose of BLM in managing leasing on public lands? Is it resource preservation or sustainable yield?
- Want good managers and good science to be included.
- Small town tends to understand BLM better
- Montrose County brochure – fence laws, water rights - publishing brochures would let residents know what rule are, could work with Counties to do such
- **San Juan Mountain Association – helps to get word out**
- Participate in events like Main in Motion – get presence out there
- Don't see BLM out there on the ground
- Uniforms stand out and are recognizable
- BLM is not known to “toot our own horn”
- **Add to the BLM portal signs - Managing your public lands for responsible uses (possible language for signs)**

3) How can we communicate more effectively to your area? What is the best way to get message out

- More law enforcement officers and Rangers out and about more often, and positive public contacts being made.
- When out, take the time to stop and talk to the public. New employees are not trained how to or that they should talk to the public. They don't want to say, “I don't know”, “Can I get you the answer”, or “Here's where you get the information.”
- Hand out brochures
- Have seasonals wear uniforms (t-shirts, etc.) as well.
- Keep other specialists/ BLM divisions informed. Be aware of what other specialists/ divisions are doing
- Get information on BLM management of public lands to the high schools as these are some of the current public lands users/ abusers and responsible users of the future. This could include presentations on minerals managed by and jobs in the BLM.
- Take advantage of Bio classes and teachers – get them involved
- New public affairs person may be able to get out and get the message out
- Use partner groups to sponsor field trips/presentations

Public Comment:

Al Heaton: Wanted to make the RAC aware that Mobile Oil/El Paso Corp.'s Ruby Pipeline project across WY, UT, NV, and OR has given Western Watersheds Project \$20 million to end threats of formally objecting to the pipeline project. Western Watersheds Project is an anti-public lands, anti-grazing group who could attempt to use this money to buy up and retire federal grazing permits.

Status of grazing on BLM– SW RAC reaffirms status of grazing on public lands – discussion topic for future or super RAC.

With Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) funds, if you defeat the government in court, you can get reimbursed for legal funds. EAJA was designed to help those who couldn't otherwise afford to take on the government in litigation, but many large, well-funded environmental organizations like Western Watersheds have learned how stir up multiple years of litigation against the federal government costing the taxpayers millions of dollars and to the detriment of historic and legitimate public land uses like grazing.

Another strategy that has been used to effectively kill grazing permits is to make excessive requests for records and information (FOIA requests) so that the permits are tied up so long, the ranchers can't get their permits in time. Without obtaining permits in time, the rancher has nowhere to graze his stock and has to find other pasture or sell-out.

Field Manager Reports**Gunnison Field Office – Brian St George**

- See Handout
- A land slide on Redbridge road on the Lake Fork blocked access to a NPS campground. BLM is still working with the NPS to determine a course of action for cleanup. Cannot presently get RV's into the campground.

Uncompahgre Field Office – Dave Kauffman

- See Handout

San Juan Public Lands Center – Mark Stiles

- The Canyons of the Ancients NM Plan is done. The plan addressed some grazing issues.
- The San Juan RMP supplement is still in progress with continued review and analysis of air quality issues.
- Staff changes include; Jamie Sellar-Baker has moved to the National Operations Center as branch chief, the Realty Specialist position has been filled in Dolores, and there are other FS management positions being turned over.
- ARRA projects include: Animas Mountain fuels project being done by the Veterans Green Corp, working on abandoned mine closures and the new roof and photovoltaic system on the Anasazi Heritage Center.
- The NEPA work for the Southern Ute tribe's Applications for Permits to Drill (APD) are being finished by the BIA and will also be signed-off by BLM.

- NEPA is already complete for the Kinder-Morgan project, but BLM has not yet received any APDs.
- An oil spill from older, leaking well-heads, flowed from CO to Navajo land on the UT side.
- BLM continues to see a few more of the Four-Corners ARPA cases settled.
- There have been several sheep guard dog issues. These dogs are very aggressive and have attacked hikers and others dogs! Dead dogs have been found along trails.
- Mountain Studies Institute in Silverton has been working on internships and presentations on mercury deposition in lakes. Does fire cause it? Their fens/bogs work includes looking at rare plants, correct drainage issues, and bio char as soil amendments to correct pH issues.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Friday, October, 8 at the fairgrounds events center in Ridgway.

Possible topics:

Grazing

Geothermal leasing

Science – MSI

Cultural Resources Update – Historical mining specifically

Northern Dolores Plan?

Roy Smith Wild and Scenic?

Super RAC - Alamosa or Canon City would be OK, February preferred as opposed to May

Agenda ideas:

Grazing

Oil and Gas

Ground water contamination/Fracing Fluids

At 4:01 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by Wally White, second by Peter Mueller. Meeting adjourned.

Fact Sheet

Geothermal Scoping

March 11, 2010
(updated 8/12/10)

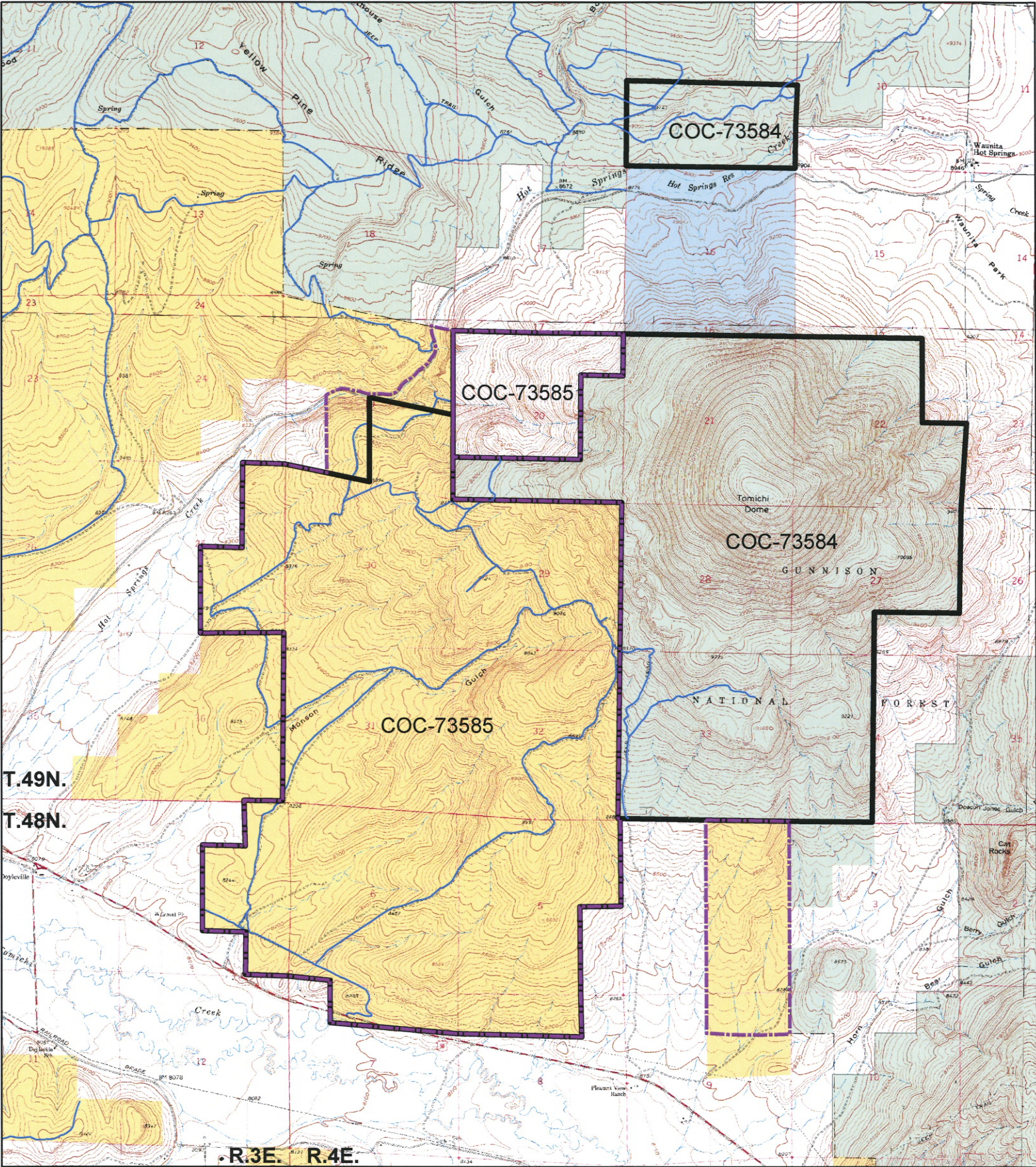
- **No decision has been made as to whether or not to lease for geothermal energy in the Gunnison area.** The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Gunnison Field Office are seeking public comments to address whether geothermal leasing is appropriate for two blocks of land near Gunnison for geothermal energy development.
- Both areas were nominated for lease by a renewable energy company. They include nearly 9,000 acres of mostly BLM and U.S. Forest Service lands in southeastern Gunnison County near Tomichi Dome and the Waunita Hot Springs.
- One of the nominated blocks includes about 4,586 acres of BLM lands and 400 acres of private land with federal minerals underneath. The second block includes about 3,765 acres of Forest Service lands.
- The BLM and the Forest Service will analyze the environmental effects of leasing the land for geothermal development (and surface occupancy) to determine if leasing is appropriate, and if so, what conditions would be required to protect resource values.
- All of the BLM and private lands, and approximately 980 acres of the NFS lands, are within occupied Gunnison sage-grouse habitat, which means some measures may be required to adequately conserve the habitat, including leks in and near the nominated areas. The Gunnison sage-grouse is currently being considered for protection under the Endangered Species Act by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Some of the nominated lands are also habitat for the Canada lynx.
- This is the first time lands have been nominated for geothermal leasing in the Gunnison Basin in 35 years. The last geothermal leases were applied for in 1974 and were for Forest Service lands near the Waunita Hot Springs. Mobil Oil Corporation was the applicant, and the company withdrew its applications in 1991.
- Currently, there are no public lands in Colorado leased for geothermal energy development. However, BLM and Forest Service lands in Colorado include about 5.8 million acres that are open to geothermal leasing.
- Geothermal energy is a renewable, alternative energy source, but because the technologies used to access geothermal resources are similar to those used to access oil



and gas, the BLM has historically administered geothermal leasing and development under its Division of Fluid Minerals.

- The Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 (the Steam Act) authorizes the BLM to lease development rights to the "heat" of the public's mineral estate. The 2005 Energy Policy Act simplified royalty calculations and initiated a national environmental analysis to make more lands available for geothermal leasing and development. The BLM and Forest Service prepared a Programmatic Geothermal Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) in 2008.
- As with other subsurface federal minerals, a developer who holds the geothermal lease is required to make a good faith effort to contact the surface owners and reach an agreement regarding surface use.
- The State of Colorado has specific permitting authorities related to geothermal development. The BLM and the State of Colorado are currently discussing how to cooperatively manage geothermal development.
- There is no set temperature that the BLM uses to determine whether the heat in water can become leasable or not. The BLM's role is to lease for geothermal energy where appropriate if the environmental concerns have been addressed.
- Geothermal potential can be determined in a number of ways including; drilling, the existence of hot/warm springs, volcanic activity, geysers, trace elements associated with geothermal activity, or simply flying over an area during winter or spring to see where the snow may be thinner than surrounding areas.
- Typically, the acreage needed for any geothermal production plant is dependent on the amount of megawatts the plant produces. For instance, a binary geothermal plant generally requires about 1,400 square meters per megawatt.
- If the BLM or Forest Service determines that geothermal leasing is appropriate for these areas, and a company is awarded a lease through our lease sale, the company will then enter the exploratory phase to determine where the best location is to develop geothermal energy. The BLM will conduct all of the necessary environmental analysis, including additional public scoping, to determine if, and under what conditions geothermal development may be approved.
- A company producing geothermal energy on public lands is required to pay 1.75 percent of gross revenue from electricity sales in royalties for the first 10 years of a lease, and 3 percent thereafter. Fifty percent of that amount goes to the State of Colorado, 25 percent goes to the affected County, and the other 25 percent goes to the U.S. Treasury.
- The U.S. Geological Survey estimates between eight and 67 megawatts of energy could be developed from geothermal lands in Colorado by 2038, enough to provide the annual electricity for as many as 25,000 homes.

Competitive Geothermal Lease Nomination Area



LAND OWNERSHIP

- BLM
- Private
- Forest Service
- State

- Analysis Area
- Lease Nomination Area
- Roads



Southwest Resource Advisory Council
Meeting August 13, 2010

Uncompahgre Field Office Update

Uncompahgre Field Office – Resource Management Plan – work continues with alternatives, scoping comments, wild and scenic river and other issues. Meetings with Cooperating Agencies and SW Resource Advisory Council Subgroup - ongoing and have been very successful and valuable to all of us.

Wild and Scenic River Final Report available to the public; accompanied by letter to interested constituents.

Dry Creek Travel Plan - implementation is ongoing; early work is concentrating on maps, signs etc. A fall meeting planned with communities and interest groups – Public Lands Partnership to organize.

ARRA (Stimulus Projects) are well underway, or completed. Of our 16 projects: 3 deferred maintenance type projects on the BLM compound – 1 almost done, contracts awarded for the other 2 – initial work starting. Much activity over the next few months; 3 Abandoned Mine Closure Projects on the west end – 2 projects completed, the third project will be done in September; 3 Gunnison Gorge NCA recreation projects – Chukar Rd graveling and repair done; Recreation site trailheads, parking, etc. project underway throughout NCA, Sidewinder Trail construction and resource mitigation is underway – with over 15 miles of trail constructed; 7 habitat improvement projects (weed treatments, cottonwood planting, mechanical vegetation projects, stock water pond construction, maintenance/repair, monitoring etc.) 3 are completed, 3 are over 80% completed, 1 will start this month – all done by end of September.

Gunnison Gorge NCA

Staff working hard on ARRA projects. Sidewinder trail project receiving a lot of positive feedback in the community and with users; great volunteer help from public and user groups. Planning underway for National Public Lands Day project – Big Horn Trail project; a volunteer project in wilderness area scheduled for Saturday - Sept. 25. The BLM OHV trail crew (funded in large part by Colorado State OHV funds) is busy with trail maintenance, construction, signing, education activities in the NCA and Field Office (Dry Creek). Lawhead Gulch archaeological project continues – an archeological field school is at the site now continuing with site inventory and recordation work. North Rim project (a collaborative healthy lands initiative project)– eastern portion of the NCA Fruitland Mesa-Crawford area; had a great field trip yesterday with partners, looking at habitat restoration needs involves big game and Gunnison Sage Grouse; also part of NCA science program.

White Nose Syndrome – a fungus that is almost always lethal to bats is a growing concern. Considered as a wildlife crisis already killed 1 million bats in Canada, and eastern US. Not confirmed yet in Colorado. BLM is very concerned, now working with partner agencies, and user groups to develop a coordinated strategy for addressing WNS in Colorado. Bats are an essential part of nature and play a critical role in insect control, plant pollination, seed dissemination, and they help control insect pests. Our goal is to help protect bats from the spread of this disease into Colorado.

Dominguez-Escalante NCA – Notice of Intent to Prepare Resource Management Plan – published in Federal Register August 3, 2010. This initiates the public scoping process. Comments on issues and planning criteria may be submitted in writing to - BLM in Grand Junction until Sept 2, 2010. There will be at least one, probably two scoping meetings which have not been scheduled yet.



BLM Resource Advisory Councils

Partners Across The West

Southwest Resource Advisory Council Meeting

Friday, August 13, 2010

Gunnison, Colorado

Gunnison Field Manager Update

American Recovery and Revitalization Act Projects

- 7 projects in the Gunnison Basin (two completed).
- 5 other projects will begin this summer or fall, all but one completed by end of 2010.

Alpine Loop Recreation Management Plan

- Primary purpose of the RAMP is to enhance the recreation and heritage tourism opportunities on the Loop.
- BLM Columbine and Gunnison Field Offices released the draft plan for public comment, comment period closed June 21, all comments addressed.
- Waiting for final USFWS review of the biological assessment for Lynx – due in Sept.
- Actions include improved interpretive and travel signage; expanded vehicle staging areas; expanded foot and horse trail network; improved resource monitoring and restoration.
- No proposed designations such as NCA, no changes to management of wilderness characteristics within the Wilderness Study Areas, no existing routes will be closed.

* Law enforcement note – 3 detailed Rangers, all well received by the public.

*Visitation note – some discussion has begun about updating visitation counts on the Loop.

Recreation Facilities in Gunnison Resource Area

- As a result of heavy spring runoff and heavy monsoonal rains, we have temporarily closed two popular recreation sites.
- Oh-be-Joyful road and part of the campground on the Slate River near Crested Butte
- Gateview campground and Redbridge road on the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River.

Geothermal Lease Application

- Scoping formally announced in the Federal Register on May 25, closed June 24.
- One additional openhouse will be held at the the BLM Gunnison Field Office on or about Sept 2. USFS and State of Colorado have expressed interest in another joint openhouse as well.
- Environmental analysis is ongoing. Sage-grouse habitat assessment is ongoing through a contractor – BioLogic.
- Cooperating Agencies have reviewed preliminary alternatives.
- Draft environmental assessment will be available for public review late Fall 2010.
- Video of operational geothermal plant in Burley, Idaho.

Staffing and Building Update

- Gunnison Field Office will move into new, temporary office space in Nov/Dec.
- CDOW Discovery Center

Climate Change

- Continue to work with The Nature Conservancy, local land managers and private interests on a Gunnison Basin climate initiative
- Initiative is designed to identify “no regret” strategies and ongoing projects that support climate change adaptation.
- Currently developing a screening tool to assess how well ongoing projects address climate concerns and impacts.

Mt Emmons Mine

- No new updates.

Candidate Conservation Agreement for Gunnison Sage Grouse

- No new updates.

ETHICS TRAINING CERTIFICATION

I, Robert Ernst (PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME), of
COS05 (Office Code, e.g. SOL-Ethics Office), certify that I have
received a minimum of one hour of Ethics Training for this calendar year. I understand the ethics
concepts and principles presented during this training. I know that I can contact the Departmental
Ethics Office by telephone at (202)208-7960, email at DOI_Ethics@ios.doi.gov, or in person with
questions about this training or other ethics inquiries.

Date of training: 11/18/2010

Type of training taken (please give some specificity, such as which satellite broadcast you watched, which agency's computer-based training modules you used, what ethics subjects you read about, etc.):

 Read the 2010 Supplemental Ethics Guide

_____ Watched satellite broadcast

X	Watched video of a satellite broadcast
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_____ Read other materials (please specify)

_____Computer-based training modules

_____Live ethics training

Notes regarding the type of training taken:

Who was the instructor (if known)_____

Please return this Ethics Training Certificate to your Bureau Ethics Coordinator.

Robert Long

Signature

11/18/10

Date _____

Velles a Pfi fer

Supervisor's Signature

11-19-10

Date _____